(b) A quantity of 3.33 lakh tonnes is released as monthly levy sugar quota to State Governments/Union Territories for distribution to consumers through the Public Distribution System. In addition, Government has allowed 5% ad-hoc increase in the monthly levy quota for the period August, 1991 to March, 1992.

(c) During the current 1991-92 season, a quantity of 36.30 lakh tonnes has been released tas free-sale for sale in the open market upto March, 1992.

(d) A quantity of 2.07 lakh tonnes and 28.8 lakh tonnes was exported to various countries during 1990-91 season (October– September) and 1991-92 season upto 26-2-1992, respectively, as per details given below :—

Countries to which exported	Quantity of Sugar exported during	
	1990-91 Season	1991-92 Season (upto 26-2-1992)
	(Lakh tonnes-Provisional)	
U.S.A.	0·15	..
EEC	0·10	..
Turkey	0·13	..
Indonesia	0·74	0·22
Egypt	0·13	0·19
Jordan	..	1·03
Libya	..	0·41
Yeman	..	0·37
Srilanka	0·65	0·61
Nepal	0·17	0·05
TOTAL :	2·07	2·88

Rise in prices of foodgrains

1442. DR. SANJAYA SINH : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Food Prices have shot up by 4 per cent to 55 per cent in the past one year causing sharp erosion in the purchasing power of a large section of the population as per the news item entitled; 'Food Prices up purchasing power on erosion which appeared in the 17th February, 1992; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor and corrective steps Governmentpropose to take in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI TARUN GOGOI) : (a) The index numbers of wholesale prices of foodgrains as on 15-2-92 indicate an increase of 24.6% over that a year ago. The percentage variation in indices of cereals and pulses in the current year compared with that in the lst year are given as under :—

Item	15-2-92 16-2-91	16-2-91 17-2-90
Foodgrains	+ 24P6	+ 24.6
Cereals	+ 28P4	+ 25.6
Rice	+ 30.1	+ 15.2
Wheat	+ 17h3	+ 46.8
Pulses	+ 5.5	+ 20.0

(b) The main reasons for rise in prices of foodgrains are decline in the production of kharif cereals, increase in the minimum support prices/procurement prices resulting in increase in Central issue prices, general inflationary trend in the economy etc. In order to release pressure on prices, the Government increased monthly allocations of wheat and rice to States/Union Territories for distribution through public distribution system and released additional quantities of wheat for open sale and have decided to import I million tonnes of wheat from abroad.